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Patentanmeldung Nr. Patent application No. Demande de brevet n°

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Der Präsident des Europäischen Patentamts;  
Im Auftrag

For the President of the European Patent Office

Le Président de l'Office européen des brevets  
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**Blatt 2 der Bescheinigung  
Sheet 2 of the certificate  
Page 2 de l'attestation**

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Anmelder:  
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GERMANY

Bezeichnung der Erfindung:  
Title of the invention:  
Titre de l'invention:

Receiver for receiving broadcast signals, comprising two tuners, for receiving a broadcast signal transmitted on two different broadcast frequencies or using two different broadcast systems

In Anspruch genommene Priorität(en) / Priority(ies) claimed / Priorité(s) revendiquée(s)

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**See for original title of the application  
page 1 of the description**

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16.02.2001

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**Alternative System Switching**

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**Description**

- 1 The present invention relates to a broadcast receiver, in particular to a broad-  
cast receiver capable of receiving a broadcast program via different transmis-  
sion channels to select the one with the highest reception quality. Further, the  
present invention relates to a method to switch such a broadcast receiver from  
5 one transmission channel to another transmission channel.

- Alternative frequency switching strategies are widely used today, for example in  
FM-broadcasting. Here, a transmitter transmits a list of alternative frequencies  
on which transmitters at other locations transmit the same program. A receiver  
10 checks the signal quality of these alternative frequencies from time to time and  
switches to an alternative frequency with better signal quality in case of a bad  
reception situation. Depending on the receiver architecture, such a switching  
from one frequency to another frequency is more or less audible. In a single  
tuner concept usually a very short program break occurs and in a two tuner  
15 concept the switching is nearly not audible for the listener.

- Today most radio stations do not only transmit the same program on alterna-  
tive frequencies of one broadcast system, e. g. FM, but are simulcasting, i.e.  
transmitting the same program also on different broadcast systems, e.g. on a  
20 digital system like DAB, ISDB-Tn, IBOC or DAM and FM at the same time. How-  
ever, the switching from one broadcast system to another broadcast system  
produces big distortions today.

- Therefore, it is the object underlying the present invention to provide an alter-  
25 native frequency and/or alternative broadcast system switching strategy which  
produces less audible distortions.

- According to the present invention this object is solved by a broadcast receiver  
according to independent claim 1 and a switching strategy defined in inde-  
30 pendent claim 10. Preferred embodiments thereof are respectively defined in  
the respective following dependent claims. A computer program product accord-  
ing to the present invention is defined in claim 19.

- A broadcast receiver according to the present invention comprises a first  
35 tuner receiving a broadcast program on a predetermined frequency of a prede-  
termined broadcast system, a second tuner receiving said broadcast program

1 on an alternative frequency of said predetermined broadcast system or of an  
alternative broadcast system, and a delay unit receiving an output signal of  
said first tuner and an output signal of said second tuner to compensate a  
time delay between said both output signals.

5

Corresponding, the method to switch a broadcast receiver from a first tuner re-  
ceiving a broadcast program on a predetermined frequency of a predetermined  
broadcast system to a second tuner receiving said broadcast program on an al-  
ternative frequency of said predetermined broadcast system or of an alterna-  
10 tive broadcast system according to the present invention comprises the step of  
compensating a time delay between an output signal of said first tuner and an  
output signal of said second tuner.

Therefore, according to the present invention a time delay between the output  
15 signals of a first tuner and a second tuner is compensated. This compensation  
eliminates the effects of different receiver concepts for different broadcast sys-  
tems and different transmission or propagation times of the signal via different  
transmission channels, e.g. different frequencies of one broadcast system or  
different broadcast systems. E.g. digital receivers usually delay the audio sig-  
20 nal more than analog receivers. The delay in digital receivers is caused by a  
time interleaver that is required to reduce the distortions caused by fading ef-  
fects in a mobile communication channel. Preferably, the output signal of the  
second tuner is "shifted" so that it corresponds to that of the first tuner to  
which the user currently listens.

25

According to a preferred embodiment of the broadcast receiver according to the  
present invention additionally comprises an amplitude adaptation unit receiv-  
ing an output signal of said first tuner and an output signal of said second  
tuner via said delay unit to compensate an amplitude difference between said  
30 both time delay compensated output signals.

Corresponding, a preferred embodiment of the method according to the present  
invention additionally comprises the step of compensating an amplitude differ-  
ence between said time delay compensated output signals of said first tuner  
35 and of said second tuner.

Therefore, according to this preferred embodiment of the present invention

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- 1 also an amplitude difference between said both time delay compensated output  
signals is compensated, preferably so that the amplitude of the time delay  
compensated output signal of the second tuner gets adapted to that of the first  
tuner. This eliminates changes of an output level of the receiver in case of  
5 switching from one broadcast frequency or system to another, since different  
amplitudes of audio signals transmitted with different broadcast systems are  
eliminated which are likely possible.

- Therewith, the present invention, in particular according to this preferred  
10 embodiment, enables to switch for example from a digital system like DAB to  
another digital system like DAM or to an analog system like FM or AM without  
audible distortions in the audio signal. Therewith, the present invention allows  
a kind of broadcast system diversity to avoid distortions or loss of the audio  
signal in case of bad reception situations. According to the the present in-  
15 vention the repeating of parts of the audio signal (audio frame repetition) or  
muting of the audio signal in case of bad reception situations which is widely  
used in today's digital systems, e. g. DAB, can be avoided, since audio data  
from another broadcast system or channel can be used to fill the missing  
audio data, e. g. FM-audio data can be used to fill missing DAB audio data.

20

- As stated above, the broadcast receiver according to the present invention  
comprises two tuners, in particular a first tuner receiving a broadcast program  
on a predetermined frequency of a predetermined broadcast system and a  
second tuner receiving said broadcast program on an alternative frequency of  
25 said predetermined broadcast system or of an alternative broadcast system.

- According to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention the time  
delay between said both output signals of the first tuner and the second tuner  
is determined by a correlation. In this case the determined correlation peak  
30 describes the time delay between both output signals. Further preferably,  
respective mono signals of said both output signal of the first tuner and the  
second tuner are correlated to avoid distortions in the correlation result.

- According to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention prefera-  
35 bly said output signal of the first tuner is delayed in case it advances the out-  
put signal of the second tuner and the output signal of the second tuner is de-  
layed in case it advances the output signal of the first tuner. Alternatively,



1 also an initial delay can be provided for both output signals which ensure that  
also "negative" delays can be realized by relatively adjusting the delay times,  
i.e. "advancing" the output signal which needs the negative delay by reducing  
its initial delay.

5

Preferably, variable delay elements are used to provide the respectively needed  
delay which is preferably once determined and then constantly applied, but  
which also can be constantly determined to avoid distortions by switching from  
one tuner to another tuner with a delay time which is not actual. Of course,  
10 also strategies are possible according to which the delay time is determined  
and updated not constantly, but in regular time intervals.

In case the output signal of the second tuner, i. e. the tuner to which the  
broadcast receiver switches, has to be delayed a constant delay is provided at  
15 once. On the other hand, in case the output signal of the first tuner has to be  
delayed a constant delay might be provided at once, e. g. upon switching on  
the broadcast receiver, or by resampling said output signal of the first tuner  
with a higher sampling rate, i. e. interpolation, for a predetermined period of  
time till the full delay is achieved and thereafter with a constant delay, or by  
20 repeating a predetermined number of single audio samples of said output sig-  
nal of said first tuner till the full delay is achieved and thereafter with a con-  
stant delay so that the output signal of the first tuner which is output to the  
user undergoes not audible or nearly not audible changes to provide the delay.

25 Furthermore, according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention the  
amplitude difference between said both time delay compensated output signals  
of the first tuner and the second tuner gets compensated on basis of a differ-  
ence signal between said both time delay compensated output signals of said  
first tuner and of said second tuner. A subtractor which determines that dif-  
30 ference signal further preferably receives a respective lowpass filtered mono  
signal of said time delay compensated output signals of said first tuner and of  
said second tuner to avoid distortions in an amplitude calculation circuit. Still  
further preferably, multipliers which preferably adapt the output signal of the  
second tuner so that an amplitude thereof equals to an amplitude of said  
35 output signal of said first tuner are arranged so that the amplitude equali-  
zation can be made by minimizing the difference signal of both output signals  
of said first tuner and of said second tuner, i. e. the multipliers are arranged  
in the signal flow before the signals for the subtractor which determines the

- 1 difference signal are branched off.

Of course, the above described features and/or embodiments can also be combined in any way to obtain an embodiment with various advantages.

5

Further features and advantages of the broadcast receiver and method to switch a broadcast receiver according to the present invention will be elucidated from the following description of exemplary embodiments thereof taken in conjunction with the accompanying

10

**Fig. 1** which shows a preferred embodiment of a broadcast receiver according to the present invention.

The shown broadcast receiver according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention is realized as a 2 tuner concept, namely a FM tuner 1 and a DAB tuner 2. One tuner receives the current program, e. g. the DAB tuner 2 receives the current program transmitted in DAB (in this reception situation the DAB tuner 2 is the first tuner). The other tuner is tuned to the same program in another broadcast system, e. g. the FM tuner 1 receives the same program in FM (in this reception situation the FM tuner 1 is the second tuner). As described before, most likely a time difference between the audio signals of both broadcast systems exists so that it is not possible to switch the output audio signal from the DAB tuner 2 to a FM tuner 1 without distortions.

25 According to the present invention the time difference between both audio signals is equalized by a delay unit 3 connected to the FM tuner 1 and the DAB tuner 2. The time difference is calculated by correlation. Therefore, the audio signal of the DAB signal output by the DAB tuner 2 is correlated with the audio signal of the FM signal output by the FM tuner 1 by a correlation unit 3c. Since both tuners output a stereo audio signal, preferably the mono signal (left + right audio signal) is used for the correlation to avoid distortions in the correlation result. Therefore, both parts of the output signal of the FM tuner 1, i. e. the left audio signal and the right audio signal, are input to a first adder 3a which outputs a mono signal corresponding to the output signal of the FM tuner 1 to the correlation unit 3c. Similar, both components of the output signal of the DAB tuner 2, i. e. the left audio signal and the right audio signal, are input to a second adder 3b which outputs a mono signal corresponding to the

- 1 output signal of the DAB tuner 2 to the correlation unit 3c. The correlation re-  
sult, i. e. the correlation peak, describes the time delay between the DAB audio  
signal and the FM audio signal. The correlation result is fed to a first control  
unit 3d which controls a first variable delay element 3e arranged in the signal  
5 path of the FM tuner 1 after both signal components of the output signal of the  
FM tuner 1 are branched off to the first adder 3a and a second variable delay  
element 3f arranged in the signal path of the DAB tuner 2 after both signal  
components of the output signal of the DAB tuner 2 are branched off to the  
second adder 3b.

10

Depending on the sign of the time delay, the DAB output signal or the FM  
output signal need to be delayed, at least relatively to each other. As mentioned  
above, usually the DAB output audio signal is delayed to the FM output audio  
signal due to the time interleaver arranged within the DAB tuner 2. This time  
15 delay is equalized by delaying the FM audio signal by the time that is calcu-  
lated in the correlation circuit.

To allow a complete distortionless switching from one tuner to the other an am-  
plitude adaptation unit 4 is arranged in the signal path behind the above-de-  
20 scribed delay unit 3. The amplitude adaptation unit 4 compensates an ampli-  
tude difference between said both time delay compensated output signals of the  
FM tuner 1 and the DAB tuner 2 which are output by the delay unit 3. This  
adjustment of the amplitude is preferably performed by minimizing the differ-  
ence signal between the time delay compensated output signals of the FM tuner  
25 1 and the DAB tuner 2. To avoid distortions in the amplitude calculation/com-  
parison, preferably the time delay compensated lowpass filtered mono audio  
signals are used. Therefore, a third adder 4a receives both time delay compen-  
sated output signals of the FM tuner 1 to determine the time delay compen-  
sated mono audio signal of the FM tuner 1 before it is input into a first lowpass  
30 filter 4c. Similar, a fourth adder 4b receives both signal parts of the time delay  
compensated output signal of the DAB tuner 2 to calculate the delay compen-  
sated mono audio output signal of the DAB tuner 2 before it is input to a sec-  
ond lowpass filter 4d. The output signals of the first lowpass filter 4c and the  
second lowpass filter 4d are input into a subtractor 4e which determines the  
35 difference signal between the FM audio signal and the DAB audio signal. In the  
shown embodiment the output signal of the first lowpass filter 4c is used as  
subtrahend whereas the output signal of the second lowpass filter 4d is used  
as minuend.

1 The lowpass filtering has two advantages:

- The circuit for the comparison of the amplitudes is insensitive to small time differences between the DAB audio signal and the FM audio signal, and
- different frequency responses of the analog and digital broadcast systems

5 do not disturb the circuit for the comparison of the amplitudes: Due to the pre-emphasis and de-emphasis filters in combination with a limitation to a maximum frequency deviation of the FM transmitter in FM broadcast, it is not possible to transmit high frequencies in FM with the same amplitude as they are transmitted in digital systems like DAB.

10

To avoid amplitude changes in the tuned audio program, only the amplitude of the alternative frequency - in this example the amplitude of the FM audio signal - is adjusted. For the adjustment the difference signal output by the subtractor 4e is input to a second control unit 4f which outputs a first control  
15 signal to a first multiplier 4g and a second multiplier 4h which are respectively arranged in one part of the time delay compensated output signal of the FM tuner 1 and a second control signal to a third multiplier 4i and fourth multiplier 4k which are respectively arranged in one part of the time delay compensated output signal of the DAB tuner 2. The first to fourth multipliers  
20 4g to 4k are respectively arranged in the signal paths of the output signal of the tuners before the input signals to the subtractor 4e are branched off to easily achieve an amplitude control by minimization of the difference signal.

Once the broadcast receiver has calculated the correct delay and amplification/  
25 attenuation values, these values are kept constant. The receiver can now switch from one tuner to the other, i. e. from the DAB tuner 2 to the FM tuner 1 without audible distortions. The switching is performed by a switching unit 5 which is connected after the amplitude adaptation unit 4 and which receives both components of the time delay compensated amplitude adjusted output  
30 signal of the FM tuner 1 and both components of the time delay compensated amplitude adjusted output signal of the DAB tuner 2 to select both components of one thereof as audio output signal.

As elucidated above, this technique can be used to switch from DAB to FM, e.  
35 g. in case of a bad reception situation for DAB. The receiver can switch from DAB to FM for example depending on the error rate. Whenever the DAB tuner 2 has a high error rate or loses synchronization, the receiver switches from DAB tuner 2 to the FM tuner 1 to avoid distortions or interruption of the audio sig-

- 1 nal. The switching time period could be as short as just a few audio samples or an audio frame.

- 5 In the following a second reception situation is elucidated according to which the broadcast receiver shown in Fig. 1 switches from the FM tuner 1 (in this reception situation the FM tuner 1 is the first tuner) to the DAB tuner 2 (in this reception situation the DAB tuner 2 is the second tuner).

- 10 In case of reception of an FM program, the receiver switches automatically to DAB to receive the best audio quality. Therefore, according to the present invention the timing and the amplitude of the FM audio signal and the DAB audio signal are equalized. As also mentioned above, generally the DAB signal is delayed to the FM signal due to the time interleaver comprised in the DAB tuner 2. Therefore, the DAB signal would have to be delayed with a negative delay in case the FM signal should be left undelayed, which is of course not possible. Therefore, the FM audio signal has to be delayed although this signal is currently heard by a user. Therefore, the following three control strategies are advantageously implemented within the first control module 3d.

- 20 1. The FM signal is delayed at once. This can e. g. be done at the beginning, when the listener tunes to the FM station. Therefore, the receiver needs to know the delay between the FM audio signal and the DAB audio signal and needs to delay the FM audio signal with this delay. This information can be stored in the memory of the receiver. Information is calculated once and stored in the receiver like it is done today with the station name in some FM receivers. Another possibility is to delay the audio signal once and to accept that the audio signal is disturbed once. A further possibility is to provide delay lines for both tuners and to tap the output signals e.g. in the middle of each delay line so that also "negative" delays are possible for the output signal of the second tuner.
- 30 2. The FM signal is delayed by resampling the audio signal with a higher sampling rate (interpolation) for a limited time period. The interpolation with a small interpolation factor is not audible. The same effect can be achieved by reduction of the audio DAC (digital to analog converter) sampling rate for a limited time period.
- 35 3. A simple method repeats the single audio samples in the audio data. In other words, the delay is changed slowly. The distortions are almost not audible - depending on background noise, e.g. determined via the speed of

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1 a car in which the receiver is used, the delay is changed.

As indicated in the general description of the present invention, a broadcast receiver according to the present invention can of course also be used to switch  
5 from one digital system to another digital system. There is no limitation to switch from DAB to FM and vice versa. Of course, also a switching to other systems like AM, DRM, ... is possible.

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## Claims

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- 1 1. Broadcast receiver, comprising:  
a first tuner (1) receiving a broadcast program on a predetermined frequency of a predetermined broadcast system,  
a second tuner (2) receiving said broadcast program on an alternative  
5 frequency of said predetermined broadcast system or of an alternative broadcast system, and  
a delay unit (3) receiving an output signal of said first tuner (1) and an output signal of said second tuner (2) to compensate a time delay between said both output signals.
- 10 2. Broadcast receiver according to claim 1, **characterized by**  
a correlation unit (3c) within said delay unit (3) to determine the time delay between said output signal of said first tuner (1) and said output signal of said second tuner (2).
- 15 3. Broadcast receiver according to claim 2, **characterized in that**  
said correlation unit (3c) receives a respective mono signal of said output signal of said first tuner (1) and of said output signal of said second tuner (2).
- 20 4. Broadcast receiver according to anyone of claims 1 to 3, **characterized by**  
a first variable delay element (3e) within said delay unit (3) to delay said output signal of said first tuner (1) in case said output signal of said first  
25 tuner (1) advances said output signal of said second tuner (2), and  
a second variable delay element (3f) within said delay unit (3) to delay said output signal of said second tuner (2) in case said output signal of said second tuner (2) advances said output signal of said first tuner (1).
- 30 5. Broadcast receiver according to claim 4, **characterized in that**  
said first variable delay element (3e) delays said output signal of said first tuner (1) with a constant delay at once, by resampling said output signal of said first tuner (1) with a higher sampling rate, i.e. interpolation, for a predetermined periode of time till the full delay is achieved and thereafter with a constant delay, or by repeating a predetermined number of single audio sam-

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1 ples of said output signal of said first tuner (1) till the full delay is achieved  
and thereafter with a constant delay, and

said second variable delay element (3f) delays said output signal of said  
second tuner (2) with a constant delay at once.

5

6. Broadcast receiver according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized by**

an amplitude adaptation unit (4) receiving an output signal of said first  
tuner (1) and an output signal of said second tuner (2) via said delay unit (3)  
10 to compensate an amplitude difference between said both time delay compensated output signals.

7. Broadcast receiver according to claim 6, **characterized by**

a subtracter (4e) within said amplitude adaptation unit (4) to determine  
15 a difference signal between said time delay compensated output signals of said  
first tuner (1) and of said second tuner (2).

8. Broadcast receiver according to claim 7, **characterized in that**

said subtracter (4e) receives a respective low pass filtered mono signal of  
20 said time delay compensated output signals of said first tuner (1) and of said  
second tuner (2).

9. Broadcast receiver according to claim 7 or 8, **characterized by**

respective multipliers (4i, 4k) in the signal path of said output signal of  
25 said second tuner (2) to multiply said output signal so that an amplitude of  
said output signal of said second tuner (2) gets adapted to an amplitude of  
said output signal of said first tuner (1).

10. Method to switch a broadcast receiver from a first tuner (1) receiving a  
30 broadcast program on a predetermined frequency of a predetermined broadcast  
system to a second tuner (2) receiving said broadcast program on an alternative  
frequency of said predetermined broadcast system or of an alternative  
broadcast system, comprising the step of:

compensating a time delay between an output signal of said first tuner  
35 (1) and an output signal of said second tuner (2).



- 1 11. Method according to claim 10, **characterized by**  
determining the time delay between said output signal of said first tuner  
(1) and said output signal of said second tuner (2) by a correlation.
- 5 12. Method according to claim 11, **characterized by**  
determining a respective mono signal of said output signal of said first  
tuner (1) and of said output signal of said second tuner (2) to perform the cor-  
relation based thereon.
- 10 13. Method according to anyone of claims 10 to 12, **characterized by**  
delaying said output signal of said first tuner (1) in case said output sig-  
nal of said first tuner (1) advances said output signal of said second tuner (2),  
and  
delaying said output signal of said second tuner (2) in case said output  
15 signal of said second tuner (2) advances said output signal of said first tuner  
(1).
14. Method according to claim 13, **characterized in that**  
said output signal of said first tuner (1) gets delayed with a constant de-  
20 lay at once, by resampling said output signal of said first tuner (1) with a  
higher sampling rate, i.e. interpolation, for a predetermined periode of time till  
the full delay is achieved and thereafter with a constant delay, or by repeating  
a predetermined number of single audio samples of said output signal of said  
first tuner (1) till the full delay is achieved and thereafter with a constant de-  
25 lay, and  
said output signal of said second tuner (2) gets delayed with a constant  
delay at once.
15. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims 10 to 14, **character-**  
30 **ized by**  
compensating an amplitude difference between said time delay compen-  
sated output signals of said first tuner (1) and of said second tuner (2).
16. Method according to claim 15, **characterized by**  
35 determining a difference signal between said output signal of said first  
tuner (1) and said output signal of said second tuner (2).

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1 17. Method according to claim 16, **characterized by**  
determining a respective low pass filtered mono signal of said output  
signal of said first tuner (1) and of said output signal of said second tuner (2)  
to determine the difference signal between said output signals based thereon.

5

18. Method according to claim 16 or 17, **characterized by**  
multiplying said output signal of said second tuner (2) so that an ampli-  
tude of said output signal of said second tuner (2) gets adapted to an ampli-  
tude of said output signal of said first tuner (1).

10

19. Computer program product, **characterized by** computer program means  
adapted to perform the method steps defined in anyone of claims 10 to 18  
when it is executed on a computer, digital signal processor or the like.

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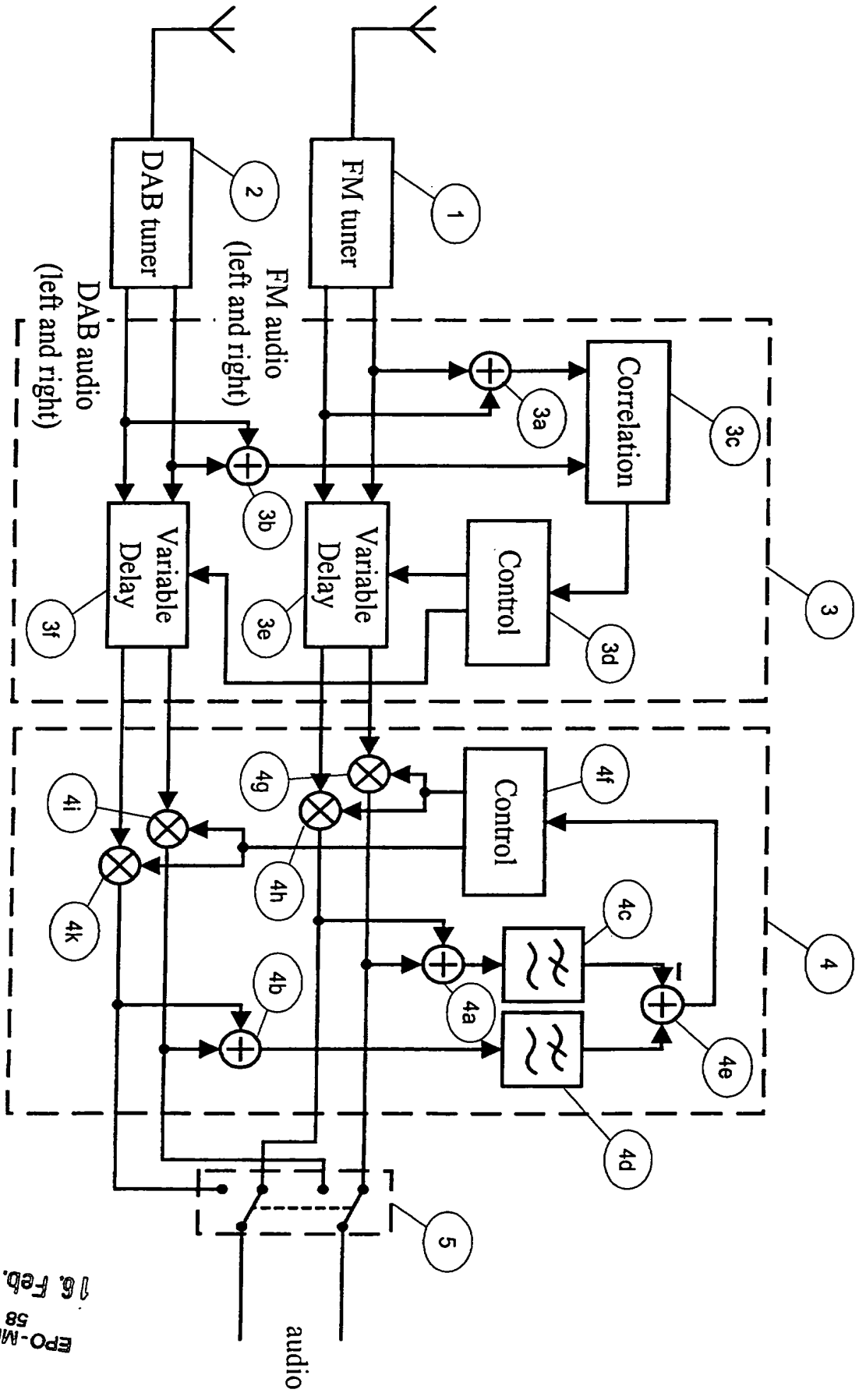
**Abstract**EPO-Munich  
58  
16. Feb. 2001**Alternative System Switching**

A broadcast receiver designed according to a two tuner concept for alternative broadcast frequency or system switching comprises a delay unit (3) receiving an output signal of the first tuner (1) and an output signal of the second tuner (2) to compensate a time delay between said both output signals. Preferably, an additional amplitude adaptation unit (4) connected after said delay unit (3) compensates an amplitude difference between said both time delay compensated output signals.

(Fig. 1)

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Figure 1



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